

[Mrs. George C. Wolffarth]

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[Work * Life History?]

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December 21, 1936.

Lubbock County.

District 17. [??] 240

Half a Century On The South Plains. 240 Pg.1 Bibliography.

Mrs. George C. [?] [Wolffarth?] . 1973W

"My father, George M. Hunt, brought his family to the South Plains in 1884, from Sterling, Kansas", [said?] Mrs. George C. [Wolffarth?] [Wolffarth] . "I was quite small then, but I have heard the details of the trip recounted numbers of times by my parents and the older children of our family[?].

"There were 14 people who started on this journey to the Texas Plains , There [?] were Henry Baldwin and his family, [?] Paul [Seely?], Miss Celia Corrigan, and an elderly man, whose name my father soon forgot, and then our family. We began the trip with three wagons, each drawn by two horses, and my father's buggy. Jimmie, our pet pony , was hitched to the buggy[?.]

"Now / one of the wagons and the team belonged to the elderly man[. ?] My father had made a trade with his to bear his part of the expense of the trip if [?] the man would bring a load of our household goods in his wagon, but on the [?] [?] day out from Sterling, he

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changed his mind and would come no farther, so father had to transfer mother's organ and the other things [that?] which the old man [????] [had been carrying on his freighter?] to the two remaining wagons, which were already everloaded, and we [??] [continued on our?] journey [???????].

"We [began?] the long trip an the afternoon of the 5th of November and reached Estacado 31 days later, the [6th of December?]. Our route ran from Sterling to Dodge City along the left bank of the Arkansas River. ?

"At Dodge City the party turned / South and took [?] The Jones and Plummer Trail[? ," Mrs. [Wolfforth?] [Wolffarth?] continued. "We had three rivers to cross [?] after that before we reached our destination. ? First we crossed the Cimarron, wich which was treacherous on account of quick-sand quicksand . There were accounts given of a whole outfit outfit's having been swallowed up in the river bed a short time before this, and natives there advised our men to drive through the stream as quickly as [they?] could, which they did, using the whips to keep the horses from stopping to drink, C.12 - 2/11/41 [?] 2 [?] and we [forded?] the river without disaster[?].

"Next we came to the Canadian River", Mrs. Wolfforth Wolffarth went on. "This river was not deep excepting where [holes?] had been washed out in the sand. A long train of wagons crossed just in front of us. These wagons were drawn by about twenty oxen. Men on horses rode across the river and picked out a crossing place before they let the ox-teams go in, so that we crossed behind them and had no trouble getting over to the other side[?].

"When we reached Red River, we found it dry at this point, and experienced no difficulty whatever in crossing[?].

"There were not many towns an our route", Mrs. Wolfforth Wolffarth explained. "After we left Dodge City the next town we reached was [Mobeetie?], then Clarendon. Two or three days after we left Clarendon we came to the headquarters of the Quitaque ranch. This

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ranch house was located near the mouth of Tule Canyon. Our party had always traveled together, but on the second day after we left the Quitaque ranch, my parents took my [?] [?] brother little baby, sister Myrtle and me in the buggy and left camp at noon before the wagons started. My father had been told that when we reached Blance Canyon, we would have to go about two miles to reach Hank Smith's home, and he thought that we were only a few miles from Mr. Smith's place, but it was much farther than he had reckoned and somehow he got confused and lost his way in the canyon. We were [?] separated from the wagons and traveled around ever [dim?] trails through the canyon. Night found us in a ravine, far from our party, [?] without food and [?] water. The few wraps that my father and mother had brought along in the buggy were not sufficient to keep us warm. This was about the first week in December and it was rather cold in the canyon, even with the mild weather that we had that winter. There was no moon [?] and it was very dark. Father got out of the buggy and sought for a protected nook in the ravine where we could spend the night. Suddenly he came to a dugout. He crept inside where there was a faint light showing at the back of the dugout. This proved to be coals in a large fireplace at the back. There was a cottonwood back-log, partly burned. Father stirred the coals and soon had a fire going. No one appeared and [??] and we [??] spent night along in the 3 dugout. There [?] [were?] no beds, [?????????] [so ? parents made ???? wagon, while they spread the night?] [?????????] sitting up . We were warm and in a measure protected from the wild animals that roamed the plains. [?] The greater part of the next morning was spent in trying to get back on the right trail ?? and at last the wagons were located and we were united again. After a good meal we started out [?] once more looking for the [Smith??] house. We traveled all the afternoon without seeing a house anywhere [and?] Night was coming down upon us [??] and [?] still in the canyon. Father and the men mother debated whether to pitch the tent and make camp for the night of to go on. They always set up the stove and put up the tent for the night, The men got out and walked down the canyon a little way ? trying to get their bearings and/ then they heard the barking of dogs in the distance. We followed the sound and soon located Hank Smith's house. They, were not surprised to see us as father had been sending his [?] cousin , Dr.

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J. W. Hunt at [Estacado?] , cards from different points of our journey and Dr. Hunt had communicated with Mr. Smith, keeping him informed of our progress. The Smiths gave us a hearty welcome and we spent the night with them ?.

“When we got to Estacado we found the little settlement to have a population of between 80 and 100 people. In another year and [?] half the population had increased to [??] 125 .
[?

“This settlement was generally know as “The Quaker Colony ? ,” Mrs. [?] Wolffarth said, “They had a church house which was a frame building, and here in this house we attended our first Christmas services in the state of Texas[?].

“Christmas Day was warm and beautiful and we had a watermelon feast on the [?] church house lawn. Isish Cox, who lived three miles west of Estacado furnished the melons. He had stored the melons in his cellar and they were in fine condition for the Christmas feast ?.

“We lived at Estacado until 1890. These were busy years for my father'. Mrs. [?] Wolffarth observed. “Judge G. M. Swink of Dallas had been appointed to come to Estacado and have a survey made of all enclosed lands. He secured a few helpers and my father was employed to go with Judge Swink and make a survey of the Circle Ranch in Hale County. This ranch was owned or controlled at this time by C. C. Slaughter[?]. 4 “At this time Crosby County was not [organized?] and was still attached to [?] County for judical judicial and surveying purposes. All of the records were kept at [Seymem?]. this made it very inconvenient for the men who tried to keep offices in Estacado, so [?] [?] the request of Paris Cox, my father was appointed by the Commissioners of Bayler County an Justice of the Peace. This constituted him as Ex-Officio Notary Public. Along with the other duties required of him, my father was sometimes asked to perform ceremonies[?].

“ During the time my parents kept a small boarding house which we called " The Llano House["]. Father also had a little store. Most of his supplies were hauled from Amarillo.

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This was not any nearer than other towns where he could have gotten his goods, but the roads to the north were usually in better condition than the other roads so that we formed the habit of going to Amarillo. On these trips we often saw deer, antelopes and wild horses. ?

"In September 1890 we moved from Estacado to Lubbock. We settled in the North town, which was across the Canyon [????????] this was the town which was laid out by F. E. Wheelock. We had sold the boarding house but still operated a store, [?] which was housed in a big tent ?.

"There was one school in Lubbock at this time, which we [?] attended. We also had our little social affairs, and church services were held at the court house. Altogether we [?] young people really had a nice time in those days ?.

"In 1894 I taught the summer school at Canyon". Mrs. [?] Wolffarth said. "And on the 24th of August in 1898, I was married to George C. Wolffarth Wolffarth . We had our ceremony performed by our Methodist pastor, H. A. Story. It was a home wedding and we received many presents from our friends. Among ? the things was a heavy silver [?] [?] , beautifully [?] engraved and? . I still have it. [?] Then there were chickens and blankets / Besides [?] other useful things for the house, which we appreciated very much. ?

"I have lived on the South Plains for 52 years". Mrs. Wolffarth Wolffarth concluded. "Many changes have taken place in the town and over the country [?] [during these?] years. I have seen the big ranches go and the farms take their place. The MOST of the cattle are gone and the cattlemen 5 changed their lines of business. Some of them turned to politics, and some to banking. The cowboys who used to ride the range , changed their lariats for hoes, or put their ponies to plows and began to till the soil. The / plains have changed, new business houses are constantly going up, new residences are being built every day and still there are not sufficient accommodations for the new people who move to Lubbock. Our little town on the plains is becoming a little city now.[?] [?]

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"There are/ just a few of the/ very pioneers left", Mrs. Wolfforth Wolffarth said softly. " My parents are both gone, many of our old friends are gone, but we have a few old-timers with us yet. There is Judge [B. F. ?] Brown . I went to school to his [???] and to Mrs. W.T. Boone too. For three generations the Boons Boones have instructed the Hunts or the Hunts were instructors for the Boones. First [???] Mrs. Boone, was my teacher then her children [???] were instructed by me and after that / My little children [?] were taught by one of Boone children. ?

"Lubbock is a fine town, I say that the credit for the real making of the town should be given largely to the cattlemen. The y / were the backbone of the plains, they withstood the hardships of those early days and blazed the [?] trail for civilization, they helped build the first settlements. When we first came to the / Plains, my people knew nothing of cattlemen, ? We had heard rough stories about the cowboys and we dreaded them even more than we did the Indians, but we found out before we had been here long , how mistaken we were , and soon learned that honesty and friendliness characterized the cowmen of the great plains Plains . ?

The George C. Wolfforths Wolffarths are one of Lubbock's most prominent pioneer families. Mrs. Wolfforth Wolffarth always taken an active part in the social life of the city and has also taken a great interest in the educational programs. Mr. Wolfforth Wolffarth was the First District Clerk of Lubbock County and served in that [?] capacity for 8 years. He organized and built the Citizens National Bank and was President of this bank for 14 years, [??]. [?] He was a cattleman in the early days on the Plains.